

令和 3 年 6 月 22 日現在

機関番号：32702

研究種目：基盤研究(C) (一般)

研究期間：2018～2020

課題番号：18K00698

研究課題名(和文) Grown children of foreign parents' experiences of minority language loss in Japan

研究課題名(英文) Grown children of foreign parents' experiences of minority language loss in Japan

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交付決定額(研究期間全体)：(直接経費) 1,300,000円

研究成果の概要(和文)：本研究は、日本における親の一方が少数派言語を使用する若者の少数派言語能力と民族アイデンティティを調査した。インタビュー調査の結果、少数派言語が話せないことに対し、多くの被験者は悔しい思いがある。また、アンケート調査の結果、少数派言語が話せない被験者は、外見などの外因性要因により「ハーフ」のアイデンティティを構築する傾向があった。それに対し、少数派言語が話せる被験者の「ハーフ」のアイデンティティ構築は、少数派言語能力などの本質的な要因に基づいていることが分かった。このように、外国人の親が自分の母語を使用しないことは、子どものウェルビーイングとアイデンティティ構造に影響を与えることが示唆された。

研究成果の学術的意義や社会的意義

The study shows the importance of minority language transmission in the family. Non-Japanese parents tend to speak Japanese instead of their native language to their children. However, speaking the parent's native language is important for the child's social, emotional and identity development.

研究成果の概要(英文)：This research investigates minority language (ML) ability and identity in mixed-ethnic youths in Japan using qualitative and quantitative approaches. Interviews with ten mixed-ethnic subjects showed that family relations, parents' reluctance to speak the ML and the prioritization of English contributed to the non-transmission of the ML. The youths described their lost opportunity to acquire the ML as regretful, indicating its impact their social and emotional well-being. Moreover, a survey of 31 mixed-ethnic youths showed that many of them feel closest to their mixed-ethnic identity. However, non-ML-speaking youths tend to associate their mixed-ethnic identity with external factors (e.g., appearances) whereas ML-speaking youths consider intrinsic factors (e.g., ML ability) as their reasons, suggesting that their language ability affects their identity development. In sum, these results indicate the importance of speaking one's own language to the child.

研究分野：Bilingualism

キーワード：minority language mixed-ethnic regret Japan youths bilingual identity monolingual

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1. Background

Nearly 1 in 50 babies born annually in Japan from 1995 to 2017 is a mixed-ethnic baby (Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare, 2019). Mixed-ethnic babies born between 1995 and 2000 have now reached adulthood. While they still represent a small part of the population, their presence is growing in Japanese society. Not all mixed-ethnic children become bilingual because there is a tendency for non-Japanese parents to speak Japanese to their children (Ishii, 2010, Jabar, 2013, Nakamura, 2016). Children's inability to speak their parents' native language affects the quality of parent-child relationships (Tannebaum & Howie 2002; Tseng & Fuligni 2000). In adulthood, children may experience regret, anger, shame, guilt, resentment, and self-doubt when recalling their language loss (Kouritzin, 1999). Minority language (ML) loss also had ramifications for their sense of identity and belonging.

2. Purpose of the study

This research focused on mixed-ethnic youths in Japan who have lost the opportunity to acquire their non-Japanese parent's native language in childhood. Specifically, it examined the factors underlying the non-transmission of the ML in the family and the implications of a lost opportunity for ML acquisition from social, emotional, and identity development perspectives. The main research questions are:

- (1) What factors contribute to the non-transmission of the ML in exogamous families in Japan?
- (2) What do mixed-ethnic youths feel about their lost opportunity to acquire the ML?
- (3) How do they develop their mixed-ethnic identity?

3. Method

Two separate studies were conducted to answer the research questions. In answering research questions (1) and (2), Study 1 used qualitative data obtained from interviews with ten mixed-ethnic children ages 18 to 23 whose non-Japanese parent is from an Asian or South American country. Each 60-minute interview was transcribed and analyzed following the constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2014). In Study 2, which focuses on research question (3), quantitative and qualitative data were obtained from 31 mixed-ethnic participants ages 17 to 25

using semi-structured questionnaires. Their non-Japanese parents have different nationalities and come from Asia, Africa, South America, and English-speaking countries.

4. Results

As shown in Table 1, analysis of interview transcripts from Study 1 revealed that family relations had the most coded segments (N=54). Accounts by Japanese-speaking monolingual mixed-ethnic children with Thai and Filipino mothers showed that their mothers' marriages to their Japanese fathers were not well-received by their Japanese family members. Tension in the same three-generation household with their Japanese grandparents reportedly pressured the participants' non-Japanese mothers to suppress their own language and culture to assimilate to the Japanese way of life. Therefore, the participants were not taught Thai or Tagalog when they were young.

Code cluster	No. of focused codes
Family relations	54
Reluctance to teach the language	26
Prioritization of English learning	18
Beliefs on language acquisition	14
Children's agency	7

Table 1: Factors affecting the non-transmission of the minority language

Emotional terms used	No. of focused codes
<i>Kuyashii</i> (regretful)	10
<i>Shabetteta hou ga yokatta</i> (it would have been better to have been able to speak)	10
<i>Hazukashii</i> (embarrassing)	6
<i>Mottainai</i> (a waste)	2
<i>Raku</i> (easier to have learned in childhood)	2
<i>Kanashii</i> (sad)	1

Table 2: Emotional terms used to describe the lost opportunity for minority language acquisition

According to the mixed-ethnic children, their parents were also reluctant to teach the ML because they negatively evaluated their native language. Some parents also felt that it was more important to learn English as an additional language instead of their native language. Study 1 also revealed that the monolingual mixed-ethnic children expressed negative emotions about growing up knowing only Japanese. As indicated in Table 2, the most frequently occurring emotional terms were *kuyashii* (regretful) (N=10) and *shabetteta hou ga yokatta* (it would have been better to have

been able to speak) (N=10). Many of the participants felt bitter and regretful over having been raised monolingually by their non-Japanese parents.

	<i>Haafu</i> identity		Japanese identity		Total
	Non-ML-speaking	ML-speaking	Non-ML-speaking	ML-speaking	
Language ability		7	3	1	11
Appearance	5	3		1	9
Values		5		1	6
Place one was raised		2	4		6
Identity hybridity	2	3			5
Parentage	2	1			3
Nationality	2		1		3
Cultural practices		2	1		3
Identity ambiguity	2	1			3
<i>Katakana</i> name	2				2
Family/friends		1	1		2
Place of birth			2		2
Current residence				1	1
Home country visits	1				1
Parent's divorce/death			1		1

Table 3: Reasons Affecting Mixed-Ethnic Youths' Perceptions of Their Identity

Results from Study 2 shows that many mixed-ethnic youths could speak their non-Japanese parents' native language (N=17, 54.8%). However, those who were bilingual tend to have lived abroad or spoke a prestigious ML taught at school, i.e., English. Ten out of the 14 non-ML-speaking participants (71.4%) and 14 out of the 17 ML-speaking participants (82.4%) feel closest to their *haafu* identity. These results indicate that most participants are partial to their *haafu* identity regardless of their ML ability. Table 3 shows that language ability (N= 11) is the most common reason given by participants for their identity perception. Seven ML-speaking participants consider their ML abilities to be the reason for their attachment to their *haafu* identity. Also, three non-ML-speaking participants feel close to their Japanese identity due to their inability to speak the ML. This finding suggests that ML abilities play a critical role in the identity perception of mixed-ethnic youths. Having an “un-Japanese” appearance is the second most important factor (n = 9), followed by values (n = 6), and the place where they were raised (n = 6).

A closer examination of the non-ML-speaking and ML-speaking participants' responses

revealed that both groups generally provided different reasons for being attached to their *haafu* identity. Non-ML speakers tend to give visible markers of their otherness, i.e., their physical attributes, dual-nationality, half-foreign parentage, and katakana names, as their reasons. In contrast, intrinsic factors relating to language, values, and identity hybridity largely determined the ML-speaking participants' closeness to their *haafu* identity. Particularly, many of them regarded their ML ability as the main reason for being able to relate to their *haafu* identity.

Conclusion

Both Study 1 and Study 2 indicate the importance of minority language transmission in the family. Non-Japanese parents may choose to speak Japanese instead of their native language to their children because of family issues or their negative evaluation of the minority language. However, these findings show that non-transmission of the ML has long-term ramifications for the social and emotional well-being of mixed-ethnic children and their identity development. More encouragement and support need to be given to non-Japanese parents to foster minority language use in the home.

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5. 主な発表論文等

〔雑誌論文〕 計2件（うち査読付論文 2件 / うち国際共著 1件 / うちオープンアクセス 0件）

1. 著者名 Janice Nakamura	4. 巻 39
2. 論文標題 Language regrets: mixed-ethnic children's lost opportunity for minority language acquisition in Japan	5. 発行年 2020年
3. 雑誌名 Multilingua	6. 最初と最後の頁 213-237
掲載論文のDOI（デジタルオブジェクト識別子） 10.1515/multi-2019-0040	査読の有無 有
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1. 著者名 Janice Nakamura and Misa Sarah Hiraoka	4. 巻 26
2. 論文標題 Minority language ability and perceived ethnic identity of mixed-ethnic youths in Japan	5. 発行年 2020年
3. 雑誌名 Japan Journal of Multilingualism and Multiculturalism	6. 最初と最後の頁 33-57
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〔学会発表〕 計3件（うち招待講演 1件 / うち国際学会 3件）

1. 発表者名 Janice Nakamura
2. 発表標題 Minority language loss in exogamous families : Language experiences of grown bicultural children of Filipino and Thai mothers in Japan
3. 学会等名 International Conference on Sociolinguistics (国際学会)
4. 発表年 2018年

1. 発表者名 Janice Nakamura
2. 発表標題 Language regrets: Mixed-ethnic children's loss opportunity for minority language acquisition in Japan
3. 学会等名 International Language in Focus Conference (国際学会)
4. 発表年 2019年

1. 発表者名 Janice Nakamura
2. 発表標題 Finding Universal Patterns in Family Language Policies and Their Effects on Children: Evidence from Different World Regions and Different Disciplines
3. 学会等名 Georgetown University Roundtable 2020 (招待講演) (国際学会)
4. 発表年 2020年

〔図書〕 計0件

〔産業財産権〕

〔その他〕

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6. 研究組織

氏名 (ローマ字氏名) (研究者番号)	所属研究機関・部局・職 (機関番号)	備考
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7. 科研費を使用して開催した国際研究集会

〔国際研究集会〕 計0件

8. 本研究に関連して実施した国際共同研究の実施状況

共同研究相手国	相手方研究機関
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